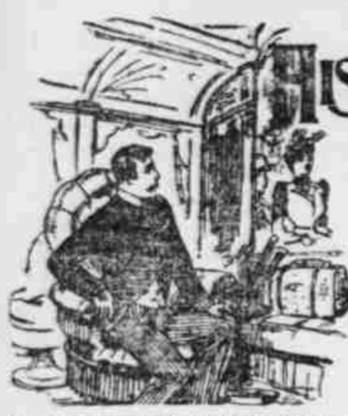
PART TWO

THE WICHITA DAILY EAGEL.

PAGES 9-12

WICHITA KANSAS, SUNDAY MORNING, OCTOBER 26, 1890.



HIS FLEETING IDEAL.

The Great Composite Novel.

THE JOINT WORK OF
W. H. Ballou, Ella Wheeler Wilcox,
Maj. Alfred C. Calhoun,
Alan Dale, Howe & Hummel,
Pauline Hall, Inspector Byrnes,
John L. Sullivan,
Nell Nelson, Mary Eastlake,
P. T. Barnum, Bill Nye.

IV—ONE PURPOSE AND TWO ENDS.

By ALAN DALE. Illustrated by WALTER H. M'DOUGALL.

Lena Hartman, the banker's daughter, was one of those matter of fact maidens who seem to have been created as a useful foil to the sentimental gushfulness of the romantic damsel.

Miss Hartman was more than delicately plump. Her appearance suggested an intense regard for meals. Like the German fraulein, who is not at all disinclined to talk love over a steaming dish of Frankfurter sausages, supplemented by sauerkraut, Miss Hartman was eminently healthy.

As for her amiability, it was simply without limit. Miss Hartman was impervious to the petty worries of life. One of her friends always declared that nothing less than an earthquake would ever cause her the least agitation.

Henry Henshall called upon this portly maiden in due time, and her appearance filled him with a vague affright.

His artistic instincts told him at once that he need never expect from her either sympathy or even interest in his plans and his aspirations.

But his promise to his father d velt in his mind sacredly intact. He would be a martyr and he must feel some consolation in that. Most men do.

It is well to reflect that one is a martyr, even though too late to be included in Fox's book.

The face of his unknown ideal blotted from his mind the large, immobile features of Miss Hartman the instant he left her, and he felt that as a reward for his sacrifice he could at least indulge in the luxury of thinking of this strangely met, strangely lost woman.

Lena Hartman was motherless, and had recently engaged as companion a woman whom Henshall regarded with undefined mistrust. She was a light haired, blue eyed woman, who years ago must have been extremely handsome, but her features were now livid with care. Her movements were furtive and catlike, and she seemed to regard the life she was living as unreal.

"What induced you to engage her, Lena?" asked Henshall one day, with the privilege of a newly made fiancee. He had glided into this position in such an unutterably commonplace manner that the chains so easily forged were hardly galling.

"Because she interests me," declared Miss Hartman. "I feel that she has a history. You always tell me, Harry, that I am the most unromantic being on earth. I know it. I can, however, appreciate romance in others, though I am aware that you think even that impossible."

Mr. Henshall sighed. He wondered stupidly if Lena would feel interested in his own brief, pointless romance.

He dimly saw the jealous demon rapping for admittance at the smooth doors of Miss Hartman's placidity. He saw the baffled retreat of this demon. He declined to admit even the possibility of Miss Hartman's jealousy.

His acquaintance with women was very slight. He imagined that the passionless affection evinced for him by his promised wife was one of those airy trifles, the presence or absence of which was but of slight significance to the welfare of the woman.

One morning Mr. Henshall called at Mr. Hartman's house, more with the object of "reporting for duty," as he styled it in mental irony, than with any well defined object in view.

Mr. and Miss Hartman were out, he was informed. Mrs. Smith, the chaperon, was at present the only member of the family now at home. She was in the drawing room, ventured the domestic, discreetly.

Henshall never knew afterward what it was that prompted him to enter instead of leaving the conventional card to indicate his unsatisfied visit.

He told the servant he would stay for a time and wait the arrival of the father and daughter. Then leaving his hat and cane in the hall he walked to the door of the drawing room, and with a slight, premonitory knock entered.

The room was unlighted save by a full, red shaded lamp that cast a pink effulgence on objects in its immediate neighborhood.

The young man saw seated on a low chair close to the lamp the apathetic form of Mrs. Smith, the chaperon. She had not heard his knock and remained seated, her hands folded listlessly in front of her, her head bent slightly forward, until the sound of his light footfall reached her ear. Then with a start she rose and placed her hand upon the region of her heart.

"You alarmed me, Mr. Henshall," she declared, with an attempt at a smile that was a signal failure. "I did not expect anybody, because Mr. Hartman and Lena have gone out. Let me see," hesitatingly. "I think they went to a reception at Mrs. Van Aken's house on the avenue. Did—you—wish"——

"Nothing," interrupted the young man with a reassuring smile. "I thought I would come in for a few minutes and rest myself."

The absence of Miss Hartman was by no means regrettable. In fact Mr. Henshall felt a distinct relief at the respite from bald platitudes that her visit on the avenue afforded him.

He looked at Mrs. Smith's face. She had evidently been weeping. He had undoubtedly interrupted a painful meditation.

Well, he reflected, she ought to thank him for that at any rate. That she was not inclined to express any gratitude either by words or by looks was very apparent. It was clear that she did not consider herself bound to entertain Miss Hartman's guest.

After a few uninteresting remarks, uttered uninterestingly, she rose and announced her intention of retiring to her room.

"I leave you," she said, "provided with a couple of readable books, and am sure that you will find them capital entertainers. Of course you will wait to see Lena and Mr. Hartman. I know it would be a great disappointment to you if you failed to meet them."

She accompanied these with a faint, significant smile that was irritatingly visible to Mr. Henshall. He colored slightly, and bit the end of his mustache to restrain the rather impatient retort that rose to his lips.

Mrs. Smith moved noiselessly about. There was the same feline suggestions about her walk that he had noticed before.

"Good night," she said indifferently.

As she passed him something fell at his feet. He saw it there before him, but made no effort to pick it up for a few seconds. Then he stooped and raised it from the floor. It was an old fashioned gold brooch, one of those trinkets that we have seen our grandmothers and great-aunts wear, and have admired in the days of our childhood.

At the back of the brooch was a portrait, beautifully colored, standing out conspicuously from the dull gold frame.

As he looked at it Henry Henshall was conscious of a mental shock such as he had rarely received. The picture conjured up a whole train of reminiscences that for the last few weeks he had hardly ventured to disturb; for in the startling eyes and uncanny expression of the photographed face he had no difficulty in recognizing the man whom he had seen in the Wagner palace car, and whom he had mentally dubbed the heavy villain of the episode.

In an instant he was on his feet; his hand was upon the bell; his intention was instantly to send a servant to Mrs. Smith, summoning her to his presence.

He was spared the trouble. The door was noiselessly opened and the lady herself entered the room.

"I dropped my brooch," she said apologetically. "No, do not trouble," she added as he made a movement. "I think I know where to find it."

The young man's heart was beating violently. He wanted to tell her that he had picked it up, but was unable to find the words.

He held it up and tried to speak. In an instant she had snatched it from his hand.

He held it up and tried to speak.

"I would not lose it for the world," she said.

Henry Henshall struggled with his emotion for a moment and overcame it.

"You know that man?" he asked harshly.

She looked at him for a moment, then burst into a loud, unmusical laugh.

"If I know that man? Ha! ha! ha! Do I know him? Ah, it is too good! Ha! ha! ha!"

She sat down and laughed hysterically, he looking at her in mute amazement. Suddenly she seemed to secure control of herself. Her laughter ceased. The expression on her face became one of uneasiness. She advanced quietly to Henshall and said, with an indifference which was unconvincing even to the young man:

"Do you know him?"

He answered at once: "I do not know him. I wish I did, for I believe he is a—a"——

He paused in embarrassment.

"Go on," she said.

"I was going to say," he resumed, "that I believe he is a villain."

"You are right," she said deliberately, fixing her blue eyes on Henshall's white face. "He is a villain, and it is his wife that says so."

Henshall recoiled. Intense surprise momentarily bewildered him; then came, like a ray of sunshine, the knowledge that here was a clew to the recovery of his ideal. Not a thought of Lena Hartman entered his mind to thwart his plans.

"You know his wife?" he asked.

Again she laughed mirthlessly. "I am the woman unfortunate enough to bear that relation to him," she said. Then in alarm: "Mr. Henshall, I do not wish to acquaint you with my past life. You have come into possession of a secret through no fault of mine. I beg of you not to betray my confidence."

Her evident sincerity overcame his animosity to the woman.

"Mrs. Smith," he said, "your secret is safe. Tell me, I implore of you, as much about this man as you conscientiously can. To show you how much in earnest I am I will tell you my reasons for asking this."

He then related to her the story of his journey in the Wagner palace car, omitting no detail likely to interest her.

He then told her (and strange to say, he really believed it himself) that his object was to find the girl, although engaged to Miss Hartman. He would be perfectly loyal to Lena, but he felt that he could not go through life without having met his ideal, if only to speak with her briefly, to study her beauty for one hour.

He must see her. He would perhaps forget her if his curiosity were satisfied.

Ah! how easy it is to "talk one's self in," as the saying is. What a delightful thing an eased conscience!

Mrs. Smith was a woman of the world, and she understood the complexion of the case far more thoroughly than did young Henshall. But apparently it served her purpose to gratify him.

"Do you know the names of the people with whom you saw him?" she asked.

"Crawford," he answered.

"Did you learn that they stopped at No. 3— West Thirty-eighth street?"

"Yes," in intense surprise, "I called there."

"So did I," she said quietly, "but the bird had flown."

"Have you any idea who the Crawfords were?" It was his turn to question.

"None at all," she replied bitterly. "I need hardly say that Watson is not my husband's name. He has assumed many aliases, but the name to which he was born is Leopardi. He is an Italian by birth. He has called himself Rimaldi, Duval, Schimmerlein, Henshaw and Watson, as far as I can remember. I met him two years ago. I knew him as Dr. Henshaw, the mind reader.

"Hypnotism was a subject in which I was deeply interested. I attended all the lectures on the subject that I could possibly find. I met Dr. Henshaw at his house. I was rich. I had money and jewels.

"How it came about I can never thoroughly understand, but we were married. Two months later he left me penniless. I waited for his return, and waited in vain. A child was born to me. Thank goodness it died. I took this position temporarily. I live for revenge, and," fiercely, "I will have it."

Grave fears for the safety of his ideal surged up forcefully in the bosom of Henry Henshall as he listened to this story. That she was in danger was now very evident. His mind was made up.

"A man and a woman, both in earnest, and working together in unison, ought to be able to accomplish a great deal. I want to find this man for chivalry's sake," he said, again furnishing excuses to himself. "You want to find him as a wronged woman. Shall we join forces?"

She hesitated for one moment. Then her mind was made up.

"Willingly," she said.

V.—TWO ON A TRAIL.

By WILLIAM F. HOWE, Assisted by ABE HUMMEL. Illustrated by A. B. SHULTZ.

"Vy dis is Dr. Henshaw, ain'd it?" exclaimed Herr Steinmetz as he laid his great hand on the shoulder of a man walking rapidly past him on lower Broadway. "Vere haf you pin all dis time? Haf you your old frents forgot?"

The doctor was in anything but an amiable frame of mind when his meditations were suddenly cut short by this inopportune recognition by an old acquaintance. With a deep frown on his brow he lifted his piercing eyes to Steinmetz's face and curtly returned the greeting.

The German pulled him out of the way of the crowd to the edge of the curbstone and plied him with questions. Was he still lecturing? What was he doing in New York? Where had he been buried out of sight for so long?

He replied that he had settled down to practice his profession in New Orleans, and had had no opportunity to meet his former acquaintances. He was spending a few days in the city to transact business of the utmost importance, and he was then on his way to keep an appointment that he could not delay, as it was already getting late.

"So," said Herr Steinmetz, "bud you must gome und see me. My gousin Heinrich Neuberger, your olt manager, is here and he will vant to talk vid you vile you stay in New York. Can't you gome to-nide?"

"I think I can," returned the doctor, who was shifting around anxiously, and evidently desired to make the interview as short as possible. He was perfectly willing to promise to see his former manager, but if there was any one man he had particular reason to avoid, that man was Heinrich Neuberger.

"You must gome to my goncert," continued Herr Steinmetz. "Id vill be grant. I haf disgofered a new Camilla Urso, a greader blayer dan Matam Urso ever. She vill make her deput to-nide at Steinway hall. You are a musician; you must hear her."

Putting the proffered complimentary ticket into his pocket the doctor, to end the interview, said "Good-by," and hurried through the first door he noticed, through the Schermerhorn building to Wall street and then down past the subtreasury and the custom house to the Hanover square station of the elevated railroad.

Henry Henshall, who had been down town to see his father, happened to be riding on the same train as the doctor, but he was so deeply engrossed in his thoughts that he did not notice the former husband of his fiancee's companion as he passed through the car looking for a seat.

The young artist was downhearted, and as the train sped up town he wondered what to do with himself to while away the evening.

He did not care to go to his club, he had no reason to go home and he had told Miss Hartman not to expect him until Saturday. When the guard yelled "Fourteenth street" he suddenly determined to leave the train and take a table d'hote dinner at one of the Italian restaurants in that portion of the city.

After his meal he enjoyed a good cigar, and then started to walk leisurely over toward Union Square, along the north side of Fourteenth street. Before he had taken many steps his artistic eye was attracted by the well rounded figure of a girl just ahead of him, who carried a leather music roll in her hand. There was something familiar in her appearance, and he quickened his pace to get a better look at her.

He lifted his piercing eyes to Steinmetz's face.

The next moment he knew that she was the ideal with whom his brain had been filled since he first caught a glimpse of her in the Wagner car.

His first impulse was to lift his hat and address her, but he restrained himself, knowing that she would undoubtedly resent his impertinence.

He resolved to find out where she went, however, and permitted her to get several feet in advance, but not very far, as he feared to lose sight of her in the crowd that was hurrying along the thoroughfare toward the places of amusement.

As the girl reached the corner of Irving place she came suddenly face to face with a man in whom Henshall recognized the younger of the two men who had been traveling with her on the New York Central railroad. She looked down and tried to pass him.

"I am very glad to meet you thus unexpectedly, Miss Crawford," sarcastically remarked the doctor, detaining her with his hand.

"Let me go; I have nothing to say to you," she exclaimed, looking up at him appealingly and shrinking from his grasp.

For a moment Henshall stood irresolute. He saw that the girl wished to escape from the man, who seemed determined not to let her go; but he could not tell what their relations had been or how his interference would be taken.

Again he heard her plead to be let alone, and she turned her eyes toward him as if to appeal for help. He saw that great, dewy tears were stealing out upon her long eyelashes, and he hesitated no longer.

"What do you mean, sir, by insulting an unprotected lady?" he cried, jumping forward and giving the doctor a shove with such violence as to nearly throw him over the iron fence around the Academy of Music. He pushed forward in front of the girl, who immediately left, and he shook his fist in the face of her astonished acquaintance.

"You deserve to be thrashed within an inch of your life," he continued, "and I feel very much inclined to give you a severe chastisement to teach you better manners."

"Come, get away from here. I will not stand any more of this nonsense," returned the physician. "I shall call a policeman if you interfere with me."

"I shall not allow any one to insult a lady in my presence," said the artist, who felt that he had to offer some justification for his conduct to the throng that had already collected around them.

"This is ridiculous! I spoke to an old friend of mine," was the final reply vouchsafed to the girl's champion, who allowed himself to be put aside as the furious doctor moved away.

Henshall followed, thinking that he might again have the opportunity of stepping between his ideal and one from whom she was evidently anxious to escape.

He was crossing Irving place when a carriage drove past. He recognized it immediately as Edward Hartman's. He hoped that the occupants would not notice him, but he was disappointed. He was walking ahead when he heard a familiar voice calling his name. He turned and saw Mr. Hartman beckoning to him. The carriage had stopped in front of the academy and the banker and his daughter were alighting.

"Lena thought she would like to go to the theatre this evening," said Mr. Hartman, after shaking hands with him, "so, as she never saw 'The Old Homestead,' I have brought her here. I have a box, and I want you to come in with us, unless you have some special engagement."

"I want to see a—friend," said Henshall.

"You can go out between the acts and see him. I may want to see a man myself, and I know that Lena will excuse us," said the banker with a facetious wink to the young man.

The artist came to the conclusion that the young lady, in whom he felt a much more lively interest than he did in Lena Hartman, had probably gone too far for him to overtake her, and so he allowed his fiancee to persuade him to enter the academy. "I really have some business on hand, though," he remarked, "and I shall be obliged to leave before the end of the performance."

He had seen Denman Thompson's play before, and he was far too much engrossed in his own thoughts to take any interest in the quiet rustic scene on the stage.

In the meantime Dr. Watson, as the evil eyed one chose to style himself for the time being, had gone along Fourteenth street as quickly as his legs could walk.

When he reached Union square he looked around in the vain hope that he might catch sight of Miss Crawford. She had disappeared, and he did not know which way to turn. People surged around in every direction, and he knew that if the girl had tried to escape she might have taken a horse car, as long as she had reached the corner ahead of him.

"Curse the luck," he muttered; "if it hadn't been for that young idiot on the block above I should have had her in safe keeping before now."

He went over to the Morton House cafe, sat down at one of the tables and ordered a glass of absinthe.

"I thought I had time to catch her again before she reached Union square," he mused. "I wonder if she really walked that whole block. She couldn't have taken one of the green cross town cars, as I did not notice any pass there. Let's see, where could she have gone? Not to any of the places on the south side of the street, that's very sure. She might have entered Steinway hall. By jove she must have done it."

This idea impressed him as being very good, and he told the waiter to bring him some more absinthe. As he sipped the liqueur his mind was active.

"Of course that old fool Steinmetz is bringing out a new fiddler, and she would naturally want to attend the concert. Supposing—no, it is not possible—yes, it is, though—she might have sought work there herself. I do not know but that she is the new Camilla Urso herself. I'll find out."

He did not dream of going to the hall himself and seeing his old friends Steinmetz and Neuberger. He left the cafe, and as a first move bought an Evening World from a newsboy and turned immediately to the amusement column, where he saw the announcement that Miss Louise Neville, a talented young artiste, would make her first public appearance in the United States.

"Louise Neville may be Edna Lewis," he thought. "It is not probable that she would appear under her own name or under the alias adopted by her father."

To settle the question to his own satisfaction he walked around to the nearest florist and bought a large bouquet. Then upon a blank card he wrote:

"With the sincere regards of an old St. Louis friend who has often enjoyed in private the accomplishments that the public are now given an opportunity to applaud. EDWIN ST. LEONARD."

He instructed a young man to deliver the flowers to Miss Neville off the stage, and to say that he had been sent by Mr. St. Leonard. Fifteen minutes later the messenger returned.

"When I handed her the flowers," he reported, "she said she was surprised to hear that Mr. St. Leonard was in New York, and she told me to thank him for her."

"I am glad to have that much settled. Now I can lay my hands on Edna," thought Dr. Watson. "Those infernal managers have hold of her; that's the only trouble. I can't very well take her by force, and I'm afraid it is too late to get the old gentleman down here before the concert closes. I'll try, though."

Returning to the Morton house he wrote this letter:

"MY DEAR MR. CRAWFORD: My efforts have at last been crowned with success. I have discovered your daughter. She is now at Steinway hall, and if you will come down here without a moment's delay you may be able to see her to-night. In haste, G. L. WATSON."

He procured a messenger boy, and by aid of a liberal tip secured the promise that the note would be delivered in the shortest possible time at Kowenhaven place, near Sixty-seventh street.

He then stationed himself near the door of Steinway hall to await developments.

Not long after this he saw his whilom assailant pass him and speak to a friend. Henshall had sat through two acts of "The Old Homestead" by the side of Miss Hartman, and, believing that he had done his full duty to her, he pleaded the engagement he had mentioned when he met her and bade her good night. In front of Steinway hall he met a brother artist whom he had known for years.

"Come in here with me," said his friend. "A musician who heard the new violinist play in private yesterday says she is simply a marvel, and that she is bound to create an immense sensation. I bought tickets and intended to come here in time, but was delayed. I hope we have not missed her entirely."

Dr. Watson did not lose sight of Henshall until the swinging doors closed behind him.

VI.—CHECK! TO THE WRONG ONE?

By PAULINE HALL. Illustrated by Miss ALICE M. LOVETT.

As Henry Henshall went into Steinway hall he caught sight of Dr. Watson standing over at the right hand entrance. Their eyes met, and each felt that it was war to the knife between them.

"What rascality is he up to now?" the young artist muttered to himself, as he followed his friend into the hall.

It was well filled. The new violinist had been thoroughly advertised. It was claimed that she was the "greatest of her sex in the use of the violin, and that Ole Bull, Joachim or Sarasati could not bring more clear and passionate tones from the instrument."

Henry Henshall read this on the programme with a smile. The concert was well on in the second half, and a woman was singing a solo when they entered. The next number was by Schumann, and was to be by the brilliant "Louise Neville."

The hall was so full that Henshall's friend said they would stand in the rear, as it would be a bother to go way down to the front of the house where his seat was, and besides he wished to remain with Henshall, who had only purchased an admission ticket.

The young artist's attention was distracted by his reveries on Dr. Watson. "I must get Mrs. Smith to make a charge against him that will lead to his arrest if it becomes necessary to protect my ideal from him. But she must still be under his fascinations, for she wishes to avoid this if possible."

At this moment the applause drew his attention to the stage. The audience had evidently been carried away by Miss Neville's playing, for they were greeting her appearance for the Schumann number with that hearty clapping of hands which is the artist's most cordial and inspiring greeting from the public.

He glanced at the beautiful girl, who advanced with a dignified manner to the front of the stage, slightly smiling her recognition of the greeting which had been given to her.

One glance told him that Louise Neville was his ideal of the Wagner car. The fair face was that which had haunted him so constantly, waking or sleeping.

"Give me your glass for a moment," he exclaimed excitedly to his friend, almost snatching it from his hand. He levelled it straight at the girl's face. She had put the violin under her chin, and the fingers of her left hand were lightly touching the strings.

She had put the violin under her chin.

Yes! It was she. The dream of the artist soul stood before him, fairer than he had imagined. She was dressed very simply in a gown of white satin, with a large sash of white silk at her slender waist.

He felt a thrill of delight! She seemed nearer to him than ever. The purpose which he had sworn in the Wagner car, when it seemed so wild and impossible to carry out, now seemed to the excited young man a very easy matter.

He felt that her position as a public or professional performer argued some difficulty in her family, and he was not slow to think that in this way the beautiful girl had sought to escape from the hateful Dr. Watson.

The next moment he was entranced. A strain of music of the most delicious sweetness streamed from her bow as she lightly swept it over the nut brown instrument which she held so caressingly.

Henshall was passionately fond of music. He had heard her wonderful playing in the car, and it had held him in thrall; but that could not be compared to this.

Edna was inspired by the occasion to her best effort. In the inspiration of the moment she forgot all but her art. The dainty melody of the great German floated on the air like a lullaby sung by one spirit to another.

As she went on he felt that some occult influence was at work within the girl. Instead of the free, spontaneous movement and the entire absorption in the composition there seemed a tense, nervous agitation in the performer which betrayed itself to him he hardly knew how. The tempo was quickened, and the bow seemed to bite into the catgut, while her smooth forehead contracted into a faint frown, her nostrils dilating slightly now and then.

Was she going to be overcome at the moment of her triumph? Could nervousness be asserting itself now after she had triumphantly conquered her public, and when the house was hanging breathlessly on her playing?

He felt in himself a sense of discomfort, which he was attributing purely to his sympathy with the young girl. But it seemed to augment. At last by an attraction which was almost against his will he felt his head turned to one side, as if drawn there by some subtle influence.

Not five yards away from him was Dr. Watson.

His eyes were bent with growing earnestness on the girl's face. They were hot, and seemed almost starting from his head. It was evident that the hateful man was concentrating all the power of his soul into that look. By his side stood Mr. Crawford.

Henry Henshall understood the situation at a glance. His own creeping, disgusted sense of being under some influence seemed explained by the magnetic attraction of this devilish man. He knew, too, that his ideal, this nervous, high strung girl whose artistic temperament must answer to the faintest impression, was being overcome by that terrible glance which Dr. Watson was directing toward her.

He felt that something must be done. A little more of this occult violence and Edna might break hopelessly down. He was her knight, self constituted, to be sure, but with the fond hope that some time he might receive from those soft brown eyes the sign that he was not an ungrateful defender.

His course was quickly decided on. He walked behind the hateful form of the doctor, and after standing a moment turned around sharply and, as if by accident, struck the man in the back so heavily that he turned in wrath and surprise.

"Oh, I beg your pardon, Dr. Leopardi," he said, with a stress upon the name.

He darted a glance at him as he said this that sufficiently conveyed his feeling. It was to be war to the knife.

Dr. Leopardi looked at him in return with a deadly hate.

"You are mistaken, sir," he said hotly, without a moment's hesitation. "My name is not Leopardi."

Henshall felt that his ruse had succeeded in what he chiefly intended. He had broken the fatal current which streamed from Dr. Watson's eyes, and which was slowly but surely unnerving the fair girl who struggled so bravely against the malign influence.

He stepped close to his ear and hissed into it: "If you do not withdraw at once and cease persecuting that innocent girl I will bring one that will prove you are Dr. Leopardi and a thief and a villain. Go, quietly and at once, and I will do nothing more at present, but otherwise beware, for I know you much better than you do me. Go!"

Leopardi's brown face grew sallow white and his eyes looked like an angry snake's.

"I will be even with you some day," he said in a low tone of intense revengefulness. "I never forget a debt like this."

Then he turned and said something to Mr. Crawford, who had been watching his daughter too persistently to have remarked this side scene. After a moment apparently of hesitation on the old man's part he turned, and with an agitated air left the hall with the doctor.

"What did you do to that fellow?" asked his companion as Henshall returned to his side.

"I scotched a snake!" he said, his lip curling with disgust and scorn.

Edna Lewis had completed her solo triumphantly, and twice she was obliged to return to bow her acknowledgments to the applauding house. She was deadly pale, and there was a strained look in the dark brown eyes which pierced Henshall's very soul.

He could not leave her unprotected. He must wait and see her safely home. Dr. Watson and old Mr. Crawford were nowhere in sight, but that did not dispel his fear.

He waited until the crowd had disappeared. Then he saw a slight figure, a gleam of white satin showing beneath the long fur trimmed cloak, which he recognized as the same that his ideal had worn at the time he had rescued her from Watson's persecutions.

She was so heavily veiled that he could not detect a single feature. He approached her humbly, and raising his hat said in the most deferential tones:

"Miss Neville, pardon my again intruding upon you, but it is only in your own regard that I do so. I have a cab here for you, which will bear you at once to your home, and if you will permit of my escort I shall feel safer to know that you arrive there without any molestation."

She bowed, but seemed too nervous to speak. As if distraught, one little gloved hand fluttered out toward him and grasped his own, but it was instantly withdrawn, and she hastily entered the coupe he had engaged.

She gathered her robes close to her, and left a place at her side for Henshall.

"Where shall I tell the driver to go?" he said as he leaned toward her.

In muffled, agitated tones the number of a west up town street was conveyed to him. He hastily repeated it to the cabman, and then boldly entered the coupe and seated himself by her side.

The cabman drove off. Henshall's fair companion kept her handkerchief to her face, and seemed to labor under an agitation that she could with difficulty repress. He made no attempt to converse with her. He had said as he closed the door of the coupe:

"Dear Miss Neville, you will surely acquit me of want of respect under the circumstances. You know my one desire is to be your most trusted guardian should you need any. Do not try to speak. My only wish is to see you safely housed."

The agitated girl underwent some violent throe of feeling, but did not attempt to speak. The carriage bowled rapidly along over the pavements, and soon drew up at the door of a large flat.

Henshall sprang out and rang the bell. The janitor opened the door, and then only did the fair maiden spring lightly from the coupe and run up the steps into the hall.

She turned, with her hand upon the door, removed her veil, and with a mocking smile called out: "Thanks, awfully! Good night!"

The next instant she had closed the door in his face and was flitting up stairs. Henshall, with a muttered curse, turned, paid the cabman, then, scowling, took down the number of the house and strode away.

The face he had seen was that of the young singer at Louise Neville's concert.

"They must have changed cloaks," he muttered to himself. Then, as he walked on, despite his chagrin, he had to laugh.

VII.—ONE THREAD BREAKS.

By INSPECTOR BYRNES. Illustrated by REGINALD T. SPERRY.

Henshall did not know whether to laugh or to swear when he reflected on the way in which he had been played by the singer. He felt glad that he had made sure of her number. He meant to see her the next day and find out if he could where Edna Lewis was living.

The interest which he had felt in this girl, who represented to him so fully his ideal, was quickened ten fold by the late occurrence. He had protected her from one whom he was convinced by many reasons she disliked and who boded her no good. The glance that had shot from her eye as she darted off when he had freed her from Dr. Watson had spoken of gratitude. He laughed at himself for being tempted to think there was any other feeling in that glance.

"Yet I had only seen her once," he said to himself, as if to defend the absurd thought that she would feel any deep interest in him. "I saw her only once, and she has lived in my brain and my heart ever since. What a soul she must have to play as she did! What could have made that woman play me like that?"

"That woman" was not the fascinating Edna, but the singer who had decoyed him away from her.

He remembered that Edna at the concert had worn a white satin dress, and the singer had worn a pink one. Then they must have changed gowns! And the long cloak he was sure was the same as that he had seen upon the young girl at the time he had come to her rescue and freed her from Dr. Watson.

He recalled the singular change which he had remarked in her playing. He also remembered the strange fact that he had turned his eyes directly from her upon Dr. Watson.

The thought that he and the girl he was beginning to feel such an interest in could be swayed by a common sympathetic feeling was pleasant to him, but when he reflected that it was the odious doctor who had apparently